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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 021990

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STATE FOR DRL, EAP/CM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/17/2031  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: HISTORIAN DING DONG DETAINED

REF: A. A) BEIJING 21895  
[1](#)B. B) BEIJING 19039  
[1](#)C. C) BEIJING 10507

Classified By: Acting Political Section Internal Unit Chief Chris Klein  
. Reasons 1.5 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) Police detained historian and activist Ding Dong at his home on the morning of October 17, Ding's wife Xing Xiaoqun told poloff by phone. This is the first time Ding has been detained, Xing said, adding that police provided no explanation for the detention. Authorities have also seized Ding's computer, printer and dozens of books and magazines, Xing related. Xing said that when authorities apprehended Ding, between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., they told her he would be released within 12 hours, apparently in line with a rule that permits the police to detain people for up to 24 hours without explanation. As of 7 p.m. October 17, Ding had not returned home. Xing reported that a police officer has been stationed outside the front door of her family's apartment all day but that no cotrols were placed on hermovements.

[1](#)2. (C) Xing said she is unsure wat has caused authorities to detain Ding. Sh told poloff, however, that Ding has been meeting regularly with Hu Jia, a rights activist who has himself been detained for questioning about his connection to arrested lawyer Gao Zhisheng (ref A). For his part, Ding is an outspoken advocate of freedom of expression. In February, he signed an open letter in support of ousted Freezing Point editor Li Datong (ref C). In addition, Ding and Xing were among a group of scholars who were warned by Beijing Public Security Bureau authorities not to attend a symposium on the 40th anniversary of the Cultural Revolution in May. At the time, Ding told poloff the PSB warned him that if he tried to fly out of the country, border officials at Beijing airport would confiscate his passport to ensure he did not travel.  
Randt